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Indians

Higley

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The Story-Teller of the Tribe



The Story-Teller of the Tribe

*A Book
of Indian Legends*

RETOLD BY
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By Elmer E. Higley

THE American Indian like most primitive peoples, believes that his natural environment is in some mysterious manner related to his spiritual life. Civilized man accounts for natural phenomena by analysis and correlation. Not so the Indian. Analogy is his means of interpretation, consequently his world is largely a world of mysticism. The inhabitants of the skies above him—sun, moon and stars, and the more familiar objects of the earth about him—trees, mountains, rivers, all have a spirit life.

Out of his world of mysticism has arisen a folk-lore, rich in its symbolical significance and picturesque in its conceptions.

Whatever the Indian's mind is concerning a one transcending Great Spirit it is certain that his theology includes many minor spirits or subordinate deities to whom he ascribes varying degrees of divine power and grotesque traits of human character. They are usually creative and are able to transform themselves at will from one object to another. Because of these characteristics, they are always prominent in the folk-lore of the Indian.

Among different tribes, these subordinate deities bear different names. Tatoosh, the Thunder-Bird, is one of the great powers in the folk-lore and traditions of the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. He flaps his wings and the thunders roll, the mountains rend, the trees shudder, and the earth rocks. The lightning is the flash of his eye. The Thunder-Bird's picture is painted on the doors of houses and on paddles and canoes and other possessions. It is also woven into the blankets.

Other minor deities are Old-Man-Above (California Indians), Great-One (certain tribes of Plains Indians), Old-Man (Blackfeet Indians). Coyote in the folk-lore of the tribes of the Southwest is ascribed special powers.

This booklet is a gleaning from many sources, bringing together legends from various tribes. It makes no pretensions of ethnological value and has no new contributions to make to the large and varied realm of Indian folk lore. The only originality claimed for it is that of converting into a free translation the stories as verbally interpreted from the Indian languages.

To afford the tales an Indian background, they have been put into the mouth of THE STORY TELLER OF THE TRIBE who relates them to an assembled group gathered about a camp fire.

In every tribe of Indians there is a Story-Teller. He relates the folk-lore and legends of the tribe to the children and youths for the purpose of keeping them informed of the history and romance and fanciful beliefs of their forefathers. These legends are sacredly cherished and handed down from generation to generation.

E. E. H.



HE RELATES THE LEGENDS OF THE TRIBE TO THE YOUTHS

How Old-Man-Above Created the World

(Shasta)

“LONG ago when the world was so new that even the stars were dark, it was very very flat. Old-Man-Above could not see through the dark to the new flat earth. Neither could he step down to it because it was too far below him.

“With a large stone he bored a hole through the sky. Through the hole he dropped down masses of ice and snow until a great pyramid arose from the plain. Old-Man-Above climbed down through the hole, then stepped from cloud to cloud until he could put his foot on top of the mass of ice and snow. Then, with one long step, he reached the earth.

“The sun shone through the hole in the sky and began to melt the ice and snow. When they were quite soft Old-Man-Above bored with his finger into the earth here and there and planted the first trees. Streams from the melting snow watered the new trees and made them grow. Then he gathered the leaves which fell from the trees and blew upon them. They became birds. He blew the leaves in one direction, they became one kind of bird, and when he blew in another direction they became another kind of bird. So he continued to blow in one direction and another until all the different kinds of birds were made.

“Next he took a very large branch from one of the trees and broke it into three pieces. The smallest of the three pieces he broke into different lengths. These he threw into the water and they became the different kinds of fish. From the middle part of the branch he made all the animals except the grizzly bear. Then from the big part of the branch he made the grizzly bear which became the master of all animals.

“He was not only large and strong, but was very cunning. When the earth was new he walked upon two feet and carried a large club. So strong was grizzly bear that Old-Man-Above began to fear the creature he had made. Therefore, to be safe, he hollowed out the great pyramid of ice and snow for a tepee. In this tepee he lived for thousands of snows. The Indians knew he lived there because they could see the smoke curling from the smoke hole of his great tepee.

“When the pale face came Old-Man-Above went away. There is no longer any smoke from the smoke hole (crater). White men call the pyramid “Mount Shasta,” but the Indians know it was the tepee of Old-Man-Above. Ugh!”



"THE THIRD CLAY MAN WAS BAKED TO A PERFECT BROWN"

How Old-Man Made the Races

(Cree)

THERE were big folks and little folks, red folks and white folks in the assembly gathered in a circle about the camp fire and waiting the inclination of the Story-Teller of the tribe.

The little folks, though their faces beamed in anxious eagerness, were respectfully quiet, for they well knew that the Story-Teller was sometimes inclined to be moody, and some of the company knew by experience that vexing impatience might have for its only reward a grunt of displeasure—and no story.

Tonight, however, he seemed to be in just the proper mood and certainly his hearers were—they always were.

“Once on a time long ago.” Yes, by that age-old method of introduction, intended to arouse interest and provoke curiosity, the Story-Teller began his story.

“One on a time long ago, Great-One lived all alone, except for the animal people who were unable to afford him satisfying companionship. There was no man of any kind in all the world. Great-One was very lonesome, and so he said, ‘I’ll make man.’ First he built a great earth-oven. When this was completed, he procured some clay and moulded it into the form of a man, then placed it in the great earth-oven. After a time he removed the clay man, but was disappointed to find it had not remained in long enough.

“This clay man became the father of all the white folks in the world.

“Again Old-Man fashioned clay into the form of a man and placed it in the great earth-oven. But again Old-Man was disappointed for on removing the clay he found it had remained in too long.

“This clay man became the father of all the black folks in the world.

“For the third time Old-Man moulded clay into the form of a man and placed it in the oven. But now he was wise by experience and more watchful. Sure enough when the third clay man was removed Old-Man was very much delighted for it was baked to a perfect brown.

“This third clay man became the father of all the red folks, or Indians, in the world. Ugh!

“What’s that? How did the Turkey get his gobble? Well—”



"THE CHIEF HAD A LOVELY DAUGHTER OF WHOM HE WAS VERY FOND"

(Seminole)

LONG ago, when the earth was very, very new, Hesuketasmese, the Great Spirit, looked down and saw some strange plants sticking up out of the sand. When he examined them they proved to be human fingers, so he reached down and pulled them up. Human beings stood before him and Hesuketasmese commanded them to go and wash off the black dirt that clung to their bodies. Some of these human beings were so full of curiosity and adventure that they stayed so long in the water and along the shore examining the curious shells that they bleached white and came out weak and pale; these were the Esta Hadke, or white folks. Others did as they were bidden, washed and came out clean, brown and strong; these were the Esta Chattie, or Indians. The remainder were too lazy to wash at all and remained black; these were the Esta Luste, or Negroes.

How the Sun, Moon and Stars Got Into the Sky

THE light of the western sky had faded into dark, while the eastern sky was becoming increasingly bright with the silver light of the rising moon. The stars were beginning to open their blinking eyes and looked down upon the assembled group.

The Story-Teller was very deliberate in seating himself—unnecessarily so, the children thought, and yet they had learned by experience not to show impatience.

The children waited, speaking no word. For a little time the Story Teller gazed into the fire, then lifted his eyes toward the moon and stars. The eyes of the children followed.

"Let me see," he mused, "I believe I promised to tell you the story of how the sun, moon, and stars got into the sky."

The expressions of approval were unanimous and smiling faces beamed their delight.

"In the beginning of the world," commenced the Story-Teller, "when the first Indians were made they had very little to make them comfortable. Besides having no fire, they lived in darkness. Of course, they suffered much during the long, cold winters, and until fire was obtained their food was only such as could be provided without cooking.

"The sun, moon, and stars were not yet in the sky. A great chief kept them in three boxes. He was very proud to think that he alone had light.

"The chief had a lovely daughter of whom he was very fond.



"AS HE FLEW OVER THE COUNTRY, DROPS OF WATER FELL FROM HIS BEAK; THESE DROPS
MADE THE RIVERS"

"At that time the raven, which then possessed the power of magic, was a devoted friend of the Indians. In many ways he had proved himself their benefactor. For a long time the raven studied how he might obtain the sun, moon, and stars for his friends.

"One day he saw the daughter of the chief going down to the brook to drink. At once he conceived the idea of having himself transformed into a pine needle that he might watch from the pine tree, the branches of which extended over the brook to which the daughter came for water.

"One day she came very thirsty. 'This is my time,' said the pine needle and just then released his hold and fell in the water, close to where the daughter was stooping, and was swallowed by her.

"At length the pine needle was born to her as a son. If the old chief had loved his daughter, he was doubly devoted to his grandson. The child had no more than to wish for an object and it was his. When the lad requested that he might play with the box containing the stars, the old chief hesitated but could not long resist the child's pleadings. For a time the child amused himself by rolling the box about, but when the grandfather was not looking, he quickly pried off the lid and threw the stars up into the sky.

"This afforded the Indians some light, but not enough to enable them to go easily about their work.

"Some time later the child made a request for the box containing the moon, and with much pleading finally obtained it. When this, too, was thrown into the sky the Indians rejoiced. They were happy in obtaining more light but found that even the moon did not afford all that was needed. And then, too, the moon would disappear for long periods.

"When the grandchild requested that he might play with the box containing the sun, the old chief frowned. When he did so even the sun seemed to darken and failed to give him the light he needed. The lad began to cry. The old chief's selfishness could not resist the tears of the lad and the box was given him. As with the stars and moon, so now with the sun; the child watched his chance, pried the lid from the box, and threw it into the sky.

"The Indians were so happy they immediately ordered a feast, the feast of the sun. Ever since then the sun, moon, and stars have remained in the sky and the Indians have had sufficient light. Ugh!"

How the Milky Way Got Into the Sky

(Cherokee)

“THE Indians had a great corn mill where they pounded the corn into meal. For a long time they had worked until there was a good supply on hand. The meal was piled so that it looked like a snowy mountain.

“One morning, however, when the Indians came to the mill they found that much of the meal had disappeared. Looking about they saw tracks of a dog and determined to catch the thief.

“A watch was set and sure enough during the night the dog came. It approached them from the North and began to eat the meal. The watchers sprang suddenly on the dog and gave him a terrible beating. As the dog hurried away the meal dropped from his mouth leaving a white trail behind him.

“That trail white folks call ‘The Milky Way,’ but the Cherokee’s name for it means Place-where-the-dog-ran. Ugh!”

How the Rivers Were Formed

(Alaskan)

“PETREL was the first person created by Raven-at-head-of-Nass. He was keeper of the fresh water. No one else might touch it. The spring he owned was in a rocky island called, Dekino, Fort-far-put, where the well may still be seen.

“One day Raven came to the place and stole a great mouthful of water and hurried away. As he flew over the country drops of water fell from his beak; these drops made the rivers. Raven said, ‘The water that I drop upon the earth here and there will whirl all the time.’ That is the reason the streams flow. ‘There will be plenty of water,’ said Raven, ‘but it will not flood the world.’

“Now before this time Raven was pure white but when he stole the water from Petrel he tried to fly out of the smoke hole. Petrel cried, ‘Spirits-smoke-hole, hold him fast.’ They could hold him only for a little time but long enough for the smoke to blacken his white coat. Ever since then Raven has worn a coat of black. Ugh!”

How the Winds Were Made

(Iroquois)

A COLD north wind filled the air with frost. Those who gathered about the camp fire came well protected with wraps and furs. The warmth of the burning logs afforded added comfort.

Occasionally the wind would sweep down upon the fire, lifting great volumes of sparks and then sending them scurrying in every direction. The trees swayed to and fro, varying their moaning song according to the intensity of the winds that bore down upon them.

When the Story-Teller arrived he, too, had provided himself with an extra blanket, throwing one upon the ground and drawing the other closely about him.

"Tonight I tell you how winds were made."

The company drew their coverings closer about them and settled down to hear the story.

"When the earth was first made, Gaoh, the Master of the Winds, kept his lodge in the Western Sky. He was very fierce. He dared not trust himself to venture from his lodge lest destruction come to the new earth. He was also very strong. For him to have gone forth, strong and fierce as he was, would have meant the tearing of the earth to pieces. So he stayed in the Western Sky. But one day he blew a great blast that called all the animal people to his abode. He summoned them to ask for their help.

"After the echoes of his thunderous blast had died away, Gaoh opened the north door of his lodge and there stood Yaogah, the huge Bear, battling with the storm and growling in a rage.

"'O Bear, you are very strong,' said Gaoh, 'you can freeze the earth and cover the rivers and lakes with your cold breath. In your strong arms you can carry raging tempests. You shall live in the North, and keep watch over my herd of winter winds when I let them loose upon the earth. You shall be the North Wind. Enter your house.'

"Then the Bear bent his head and Gaoh bound him with a leash and placed him in the Northern Sky.

"Then Gaoh blew a shrill blast and threw open the west door of his lodge. Clouds began to cover the sky. Ugly darkness filled the world. All the animals about the lodge began to tremble. With a noise like the scratching of great claws tearing the heavens, Dajoji, the Panther, sprang to Gaoh's west door.

"'Panther you are ugly and fierce,' said Gaoh. 'You can tear down the forests. You can carry the whirlwind on your strong back. You



"THE OLDEST CHINOOK BROTHER HAD A BABY SON"

can toss the waves of the sea high into the air, and snarl at the tempests when they stray from my door. You shall be the West Wind. Enter your house.'

"Then the Panther bent his head and Gaoh bound him with a leash, and placed him in the Western Sky.

"Gaoh next gave a moaning call that set all the animal folks sighing. He then threw open the east door of his lodge. The sky was weeping and a cold, chilling rain fell to the earth.

"Then there came a cracking sound like the noise of great horns breaking through the brush. Presently Oyandone, the mighty Moose, came stamping his feet impatiently at the east door.

"'Moose,' said Gaoh, 'your breath blows the gray mist and sends down the cold rain upon the earth. Your horns spread wide and can make broad the paths for my storms. With your swift hoofs you can race with the winds. You shall be the East Wind. Enter your house.'

"Then the Moose bent his head and Gaoh bound him with a leash and set him in the Eastern Sky.

"One door there was yet to open. Gaoh opened it gently and blew very softly. The echoes of his blowing came back in sweetest music. A fragrance filled the lodge. The gurgling sound of running brooks and the carolings of song birds could be heard. A thousand voices seemed just ready to whisper the mysteries of summer.

"Presently, Neoga, the brown-eyed Fawn, stood timidly waiting at Gaoh's south door.

"'Gentle Fawn,' said Gaoh, 'you walk with the summer sun and know all its beautiful paths. You know where the sweetest waters flow. You are kind like the sunbeams. You feed on dew and fragrance. The sparkle of the dew is in your eyes. You will rule my flock of summer breezes. You shall be the South Wind. Enter your house.'

"Then the Fawn bent her head and Gaoh bound her with a leash, and placed her in the Southern Sky.

"Now when the North Wind blows strong the Iroquois say, 'The Bear is prowling in the sky.' And if the West Wind snarls around the lodge door, he says, 'The Panther is whining.' When the East Wind brings the cold mist and rain, he says, 'The Moose is snorting and spreading his breath.' But when the South Wind caresses his cheek and soft voices and sweet odors are wafted toward his tent, the Iroquois says, 'The Fawn is going home to her mother Doe.' Ugh!"



"THE OLDER YOUNG CHINOOK GREW THE MORE DETERMINED HE BECAME TO OVERCOME THE
WALLA WALLA BROTHERS"

Why the Chinook Winds Blow

(*Yakama*)

“LONG time ago five brothers lived on Great River (Columbia). They were the Chinook Brothers and they caused the warm winds to blow. Another family of five other brothers also lived on Great River. Their home was at ‘the meeting of the waters’ (Walla Walla). They caused the cold winds to blow.

“The grandparents of both families of brothers, Chinook and Walla Walla, lived at ‘the place of wind drifted sands’ (Umatilla).

“Walla Walla Brothers and Chinook Brothers were always fighting. They never could meet each other without quarreling, and their continual quarreling made it very hard for the people. They made the winds sweep over the country. They blew down trees and raised great clouds of dust. They froze the rivers and thawed them and caused the floods. They kept the people in very much of discomfort.

“One day when the two families of brothers met and commenced quarreling the Walla Walla Brothers said to the Chinook Brothers, ‘We will wrestle with you and whoever falls down shall have his head cut off.’

“Coyote was made judge and it was for him to cut off the heads of those who fell down.

“Now Coyote secretly went to the grandparents of the Chinook Brothers and told them to throw oil on the ground so that their grandsons would not fall. But Coyote also secretly told the grandparents of the Walla Walla Brothers to throw ice on the ground so that their grandsons would not fall. The oil and the ice made the ground very slippery. One could not stand still upon it. But the Walla Walla grandparents threw the ice on the ground after the Chinook grandparents had covered it with oil. So the Chinook Brothers fell down, one after another, until all had fallen. Then Coyote cut off their heads. And so they were dead and the Walla Walla Brothers were supreme and brought great suffering to the people.

“But the story is not all told, for the oldest Chinook Brother had a baby son. The baby’s mother told him he must grow up to be a strong man and a great chief and avenge the death of his father and uncles. So young Chinook grew to be strong. The older he grew the more determined he became to overcome the Walla Walla Brothers. After a while he felt himself very strong. When he tested his strength every one was surprised and all hoped that some day he would overcome the Walla Walla Brothers. He could pull large fir trees up by the roots and



"HE COULD PULL LARGE FIR TREES UP BY THE ROOTS AND THROW THEM ABOUT LIKE WEEDS"

throw them about like weeds. He could bend and break a pine as if it were no more than a berry bush.

"Then young Chinook traveled up Great River. Wherever he went he pulled up large trees and piled them in confusion over each other. In the valley of the Yakama he turned aside and rested for a time, sleeping by the creek Setas. The mark of his sleeping place can be seen on the mountain's side to this day.

"After he had rested sufficiently, young Chinook came back to the Great River and traveled until he came to 'the place of wind-drifted sands.' Here he found his grandparents suffering from the cold and very hungry. The Walla Walla Brothers, since their victory, caused the north-east wind to blow all the time (the direction of the cold winds). They also stole the fish of young Chinook's grandparents when they were returning to shore. This left them without food.

"Young Chinook said to his grandparents, 'Tomorrow we will go fishing.' So next day they paddled out on the Great River. Now young Chinook could not be seen, for he laid down in the bottom of the boat. When a large number of fish had been caught so that the boat was nearly full they started for the shore. Sure enough they had not gone far before the Walla Walla Brothers started after them. But they could not catch the boat. Every time the Walla Walla Brothers came near and were about to reach for the boat it would shoot forward. So the grandparents of young Chinook reached the shore with their fish. The Walla Walla Brothers did not get one fish.

"Now the Walla Walla Brothers knew that young Chinook was alive and that it was he who was defeating them and proving superior to them. So they sent a messenger to him saying, 'We will wrestle with you, and whoever falls down shall have his head cut off.' Again Coyote was made judge and, as before, he was to cut off the head of any who should fall down.

"Again Coyote went to the grandparents of the Walla Walla Brothers and told them to throw ice on the ground where the wrestling was to be done.

"Next Coyote hurried to the grandparents of young Chinook and secretly told them to throw oil on the ground. But this time he told them to throw oil last.

"So young Chinook wrestled with one after another of the Walla Walla Brothers and until all but one had fallen. Coyote cut off their heads. The fifth brother gave up without wrestling. So Coyote permitted him to live. But Coyote said, 'You must blow only lightly. You must never freeze people again, and cause so much distress and suffering.'

"To young Chinook, Coyote said, 'You shall blow hardest only at night. When you come, you must blow first on the mountain ridges to warn the people.' Ever since that time the winters are only a little cold. Every since that time, too, when the warm wind blows, Indians say, 'Young Chinook comes.' Ugh!"

How Old-Man Rebuilt the Earth After the Flood

(Chippewa)

A HEAVY rain had fallen in the early evening leaving the ground wet and soggy. Ominous clouds were yet hanging low in the sky. The Story-Teller appeared early at the camp fire and was pleased to find that the threatening weather had not greatly reduced the size of his audience. Camp chairs were unusually in evidence, the circle of logs which generally provided seating having been abandoned. Distant rumblings hurried the Story-Teller to his tale.

"How Old-Man Rebuilt the World After the Flood."

Some of the people smiled as they sensed the harmony between his story and the weather conditions.

"For long time rains came until all the low ground was covered with water. Yet rain did not stop but continued to fall. By and by the valleys were full of water, and only the sides of the mountains could be seen. Old-Man feared that all the animal folks would be destroyed and he ordered that a great raft be built. Then he got all the animal folks on to the raft. Yet the rains came until the raft was lifted higher than the mountains and no land could be seen anywhere. After a long time Old-Man decided to send divers down to secure, if possible, some dirt. Out of this he proposed to make another world. The spotted loon was first sent down into the flood. Long he stayed beneath the water. When he came back he was dead, but was restored to life by Old-Man.

"What did you see, Brother Loon?", asked Old-Man.

"Nothing but water."

"Next the otter tried to reach the world below the flood, then followed the beaver and the gray goose, but all died and were given life again by Old-Man for their bravery.

"At last came the muskrat volunteering for service. Some of the animal folks laughed, for he had always been held in contempt. However, all admired his daring though they awaited his return with but little

hope. He was gone longer than the loon, longer than the beaver, the otter or the gray goose. When at last he returned to the surface of the water, he too was dead. Old-Man brought him to life and asked, 'What did you see?'

"I saw tops of trees.'

"A second effort was made. This time, though the muskrat returned lifeless, he held a bit of earth in his paw. Old-Man gave him life again and said, 'I shall need a little more dirt and then I am sure I can create a new world.'

"A third time the muskrat dove into the water. This time he was gone so long that all but Old-Man lost hope. 'He will come back,' insisted Old-Man. Sure enough, his lifeless body was seen floating on the water. This time he had been dead so long that he began to smell badly. Old-Man gave him life again and when he opened his paws there was the much sought earth.

"Then Old-Man began to blow upon the dirt and wave his hands."

At this the Story-Teller arose from his squatting position and, in a dramatic manner, illustrated the further proceeding of Old-Man.

"Gradually the dirt began to grow in size. Presently it was so large they could not see across it. When he blew toward the skies the mountains were lifted. When he blew toward the earth the valleys were formed.

"After he had blown for a long time he sent the wolf to run around the borders of the land. The wolf returned after a half dozen moons.

"The world is not big enough yet,' said Old-Man, and continued blowing. When he blew softly, the flowers came and transformed the hillsides into gardens. The modulations of his breath caused the different colorings in the flowers. When he blew fiercely frost came into the air and snows covered the earth.

"After a long time Old-Man again sent the wolf to run around the land, but he never returned. Old-Man had made the world so large that the wolf died of old age before he could return to the raft. 'Now,' said Old-Man, 'The world is large enough,' and then sent the animals out to occupy the land.

"But poor muskrat, ever since he was dead so long, has not been able to rid himself of the bad smell. Ugh!"



"THE FROG SWALLOWED THE FIRE AND LEAPED INTO THE WATER"

How the Indian Obtained Fire

THE Story-Teller glanced toward the heavens and gazed for a moment at the moon, and then his eyes wandered from star to star. The eyes of the children followed. Then for a moment he gazed upon the burning log before him and said, as if by sudden inspiration: "Maybe tonight you would like to hear how the Indian obtained fire." The voice of approval was unanimous.

"Well, it happened in this way," said the Story-Teller:

"A long, long time ago the Indians had no fire. There was much suffering among them because of the cold against which they were unable to protect themselves. They had to eat berries, roots, plants and nuts, but could eat no meat for lack of fire with which to cook it.

"The Indians knew where the fire was kept, but it was so well guarded by two witches, who had been set to watch over it by Great-One, that no red man had succeeded in obtaining any. These two witches slept neither night or day, but were very diligent in watching against the theft of the fire.

"One day a coyote came to the lodge of the Indians and said, 'Because of favors you have shown me I will help you obtain fire. First, we must assemble all the animal people, as we will need the help of every one.' So the animals came together in a great convention, and each promised to assist except the seal and polar bear.

"One of a kind was selected, from the cougar down to the frog. These were stationed all the way along the trail leading to the secret place where the witches kept watch over the greatly desired fire. The stronger animals were stationed nearest the place, commencing with the cougar and ending with the frog.

"Then the coyote explained that he would enter the hiding place where the fire was, snatch it away and hurry to the cougar. Then the cougar was to hurry on with it to his nearest neighbor. Thus the fire was to be relayed along the trail down to the frog. When all the animals had been stationed the coyote took with him a noble brave and hiding the Indian under a hill near the cabin of the witches, proceeded to the door, where he made bold to rap.

"'Good evening,' he said to one of the witches who opened the door, guardedly.

"'Good evening,' was the response.

"'It is a cold night,' said the coyote, 'may I come in and warm?'

"'Yes, come in,' said the witch, for she saw that the coyote had no hands with which to carry fire.

"The coyote went in and stretched himself before the fire. He hadn't

been so comfortable for a long time. Gradually the night wore on, but not for a moment did the witches relinquish their vigil. The coyote was disappointed, but not discouraged.

"The next day he went out to where the Indian was waiting and explained to him how watchful the keepers of the fire had been.

"We will have to try another plan," said he. "I will go back and take you with me. I will first enter and then you must come and make a great fuss, as if you were trying to take the fire, and while they are holding you back I will snatch a brand and rush out with it."

"That night the coyote returned to the cabin and was again admitted. When, later, the Indian came and the door was opened, he made a great ado, as if to take some fire. While the witches were struggling to hold him back the coyote seized a brand in his teeth and ran out of the open door. He fairly flew over the ground, but the witches saw the sparks flying and knew the direction he was going and gave chase.

"They were swift and gained on him rapidly. He was all out of breath by the time he had reached the first animal in line and handed on the fire-brand. As the fire was passed from one animal to another the witches pursued. More than once they nearly caught the flying animals, who ran until they were almost exhausted. As the rabbit caught the brand and rushed it to his neighbor, the squirrel, his tail caught fire and was burned off. (Since that time he has had no tail.) The squirrel seeing this catastrophe as he snatched the burning brand, threw his tail over his back where he carried it to this day.

"The squirrel was almost out of breath when he reached the frog. The witches, just ready to spring upon him, saw the fire passed on. They leaped toward the frog and caught him by his tail. They pinched so hard that the tail came off. Before that the frog was always a tadpole. That is the reason why frogs today have no tails.

"The frog swallowed the fire with a gulp, leaped into the water and remained under until he could no longer hold the fire. Coming again to the surface he found the witches gone. He then spat the fire into a log of driftwood, where it has stayed ever since.

"Always after that, when the Indian wanted fire all that he had need to do was to rub two sticks together and the fire would come out! Ugh!"

"I guess he's forgotten about the camp-fire tonight." A suspicion that the Story-Teller's delay might have been thus occasioned caused all eyes to turn in the direction of his tepee when the above possible explanation of his delay was proffered. For some time the fire had been kindled, the flames growing in brilliance on the deepening shadows of approaching night. The smaller branches of the fuel had already fallen to ashes save for the ends that projected far from the central fire. The

larger logs were falling apart into smouldering embers that revealed the grain of the timber.

But the Story-Teller had not forgotten. Darkness better suited his purpose in enforcing and illustrating the story he was about to tell. At length he came, hesitatingly, and as if feeling his way toward the light. This bit of acting was not lost to his auditors, and presently became understood as he proceeded to tell how the Indian had merged from the underworld of darkness.

How the Indian Obtained Corn

(Zuni)

“**S**HI-WANNI and She-wano-kai, his wife, were two superhuman beings. They were the parents of A-shiwi (Zuni name for ‘the people’ and always refers to themselves). The A-shiwi were born in the under world. Their parents ascended so the Sun-father. He provided each of them with a rainbow, lightning arrows and a cloud shield and directed them to go to the undermost world and bring A-Shiwi up out of the darkness and into his presence. They rent the earth with their lightning arrows and descended into the fourth world. When A-shiwi inquired ‘Who are you?’ they replied ‘The two come down.’

“The under world was dark and the people stumbled about, bumped into and fell over each other. Then Shi-wanni and Shi-wano-kai made a cornmeal path that gave sufficient light for the people to grope their way forward. The path of meal was made toward the north where grew a pine tree. This tree was cut and planted. When it was grown sufficiently tall the people climbed by means of it into the third or water moss world. Here Shi-wanni and Shi-wano-kai threw out more meal; this time to the west where grew a spruce tree. When the spruce tree was cut and planted it grew tall enough to lift the people into the second or mud world.

“Here Shi-wanni and Shi-wano-kai threw out a third path of meal—this time toward the south. In the south grew a quaking aspen which was cut and planted. This permitted the people to ascend to the first or ‘wing world’ (so called because the sun’s rays were referred to as wings). It was in this world that the Indian saw the first light of day.

“Here Shi-wanni and Shi-wano-kai threw out a path of meal to the east where grew a silver spruce and by means of which the Indians were to climb to the light of day place.

“The Indians were very happy in the light of the sun’s wings for here



"HE WALKED AMONG THE HILLS AND ALONG THE STREAMS"

they had warmth as well as light. But they had no corn. One day they heard a rumbling of the earth (earthquake) and said 'Some of our people are coming up from the under world.' Two witches appeared, a man and his wife. These witches were all powerful for good or evil. Their heads were covered with loose hoods of coarse fibre flowing in the breeze.

"Where are you going?' they were asked.

"They replied, 'We wish to go with you people to the middle place of the world.'

"We do not want you with us,' the witches were told.

"The witches, holding seeds in their closed hands which they hid under their arms, said, 'If we do not go we will destroy the land. We have all seeds here.'

"Again the witches were told they were not wanted. But again they informed the people that it would not be well with them if they were not permitted to go.

"When consent was finally given the witches demanded two children, a son and a daughter. 'Give us the children and the corn shall be yours,' they said.

"Why do you wish the children,' they were asked.

"We wish to put them to sleep that the rains may come.'

"When the children slept the witches brought about their death. They were then buried in the earth and the rains fell for four days. On the fifth day a rumbling noise was heard and the people saw the young man appearing from his grave, all dressed in green. Again there were four days of heavy rain, followed on the fifth morning by a rumbling sound when the maiden appeared from the earth. She, too, was attired in green.

"The same night the witches planted the seeds in the wet earth and the following morning the corn was a foot high, and all of the other things planted were of good size. By evening all was matured and the people (A-shiwi) ate of the new food.

"They were not pleased. It was hot like pepper. The raven was called and ate much of the corn and also some of the other things. Then the owl was called. He ate only the heart of the grain; leaving the remainder on the cob. Next the coyote came and ate of the corn. He ate of everything in the field. The raven, owl and coyote by eating of the corn sweetened it so that it became of good taste to the Indian.

"This is how the Indian obtained corn, but ever since that time the fields have had to be watched, for the raven takes the corn in the day and the coyote robs the fields at night. Ugh!"

How Indians Obtained Corn

(Chippewa)

“IN time long past, there lived in a beautiful valley an Indian, his wife and five children. The Indian was poor. He was not a successful hunter and so found it difficult to provide food for his family. His children were all too small to give him help.

“Although poor and often in want, he was cheerful and kind, and never failed to be thankful to the Great Spirit for that which he received.

“His oldest son, Wunzh, was of the same kindly disposition, gentle of heart and thankful for the good of others. When Wunzh had reached the proper age when all Indian boys fast that possibly they may see in a vision the Spirit that is to be their guide and protector through life, and converse with him, he went to a lodge that had been built in a retired spot. Here for seven days his fast was to continue.

“On the first day he walked among the hills and in the woods and along the streams that he might come close to nature, which is a purifier. He saw the fruits and flowers and longed that he might be able to do something to feed the people and beautify their lives.

“Wunzh returned to his lodge and slept. On the third day he awakened very weak and faint. Soon he saw in a vision a bright light and a beautiful young brave approaching him. He wore beautiful garments of green and yellow colors. He had a plume of fine waving feathers on his head. All of his motions were graceful.

“‘I am sent to you, my friend,’ said the visitor, in a voice like an evening breeze, ‘by the Great Spirit who made all things in the sky and on the earth. He has seen how pure are your motives in fasting. He knows it is with desire to do your people good, and to procure for them some benefit.’

“He then ordered the young man to arise and prepare to wrestle with him, as it was only by this means he could secure the coveted prize. Wunzh realized how weak he was from fasting, and yet he sensed a warmth of friendly intent on the part of his visitor.

“On the following day the visitor came again and challenged Wunzh to a trial of strength. The brave lad felt that his strength of body was even less than on the day before, but remembering his high purpose he gave himself to a splendid struggle.

“On the third day the stranger again came and the struggle was renewed. Wunzh was now determined to succeed or perish. After a contest more severe than either of the others, the stranger confessed himself defeated.

"'Tomorrow will be your last trial,' said the stranger as he was about to take his leave. 'Be strong, my friend, for this is the only way in which you can overcome me and obtain the boon you seek. Tomorrow will be the seventh day of your fasting. Your father will come and give you food to strengthen you, and tomorrow in your struggle with me you will prevail. When you have done so, strip off my garments. Clean the earth of roots and weeds, make it soft and then bury me in the spot. When you have done this leave my body in the earth, and do not disturb it. Come occasionally to the place and see if I have come to life. Never let the grass or weeds grow upon my grave. Once a month cover me with fresh earth.'

"The visitor then shook Wunzh by the hand and departed.

"In the morning Wunzh's father came to the lodge with food, saying, 'My son, your season of fasting has come to a close. The Great Spirit will not require that you fast longer.'

"But Wunzh replied, 'Wait, my father, wait till the sun goes down. I have a particular reason for extending my fast until that time.'

"'Very well,' said the father, 'I shall wait, as you request, until that hour.'

"At the usual hour the stranger came and although Wunzh had fasted now seven days, he felt a new, strange power possessing him. He grasped the stranger and wrestled with superhuman strength, and threw him down. He stripped him of his beautiful garments and finding him dead, he immediately buried him on the spot, being careful to carry out all the directions that had been given him.

"He then returned to his father's lodge where he partook sparingly of the food that had been repared for him.

"Faithfully did Wunzh visit the grave of his now dead visitor. He kept it clean from weeds and grass. One day to his surprise he saw the tops of the green plumes coming through the ground. Wunzh mellowed the earth about the plumes.

"Days and weeks passed. Following a long absence on a hunting trip, Wunzh invited his father to accompany him to the spot of his former fast. There in the place where the stranger had been planted stood a tall and graceful plant, with bright colored, silken hair, and crowned with nodding green plumes. Its stalk was dressed with waving green leaves, and there grew from its sides clusters of milk-filled ears of corn, golden and sweet, each ear closely wrapped in protecting green husks.

"'It is my friend,' shouted Wunzh joyously. 'It is my friend and the friend of all mankind. It is Mondawmin, the Indian corn. We need no longer depend on hunting, so long as this gift is planted and cared for. The Great Spirit has heard my voice and sent us a new food.'

"Wunzh then told his father the instructions given to him by the stranger. These directions have been handed down to each new generation ever since that time.

"When today the waving corn sways back and forth in the breeze, it is remembering its wrestling with Wunzh.

"That is how Indians got corn. Ugh!"

How the Indian Obtained Fruits and Berries

(Cherokee)

"**W**HAT is that he is bringing with him?" whispered one of the camp-fire crowd as the Story-Teller approached carrying a briared bush in his hand.

"Maybe he is going to switch some of us tonight," came a laughing response to the question.

"Berry bush," said the Story-Teller as he approached and lifted the bush in the light of the fire. "How Indians got fruits and berries," he added, and his auditors settled themselves to hear the story.

"Long ago there lived only two people in all the world, one man and one woman. The world was very young. Nowhere could be found any fruits or berries.

"One day the man and woman quarreled. The woman turned her face from the man and started to walk toward the place of the morning. By and by the man became very sorry. He wanted the woman to return. He called but could not make her hear. She was far toward the place of the rising sun. He began to follow but she did not turn back.

"When the Sun-father arose he looked down upon the unhappy man and was sorry for him.

"Are you still angry with your wife?" asked the Sun-father.

"No," replied the man, "and I am unhappy because I made her feel badly and drove her from me."

"Do you desire that she return?"

"Yes, and I call but she does not hear, and my heart cries out but she does not turn back."

"The Sun-father was very sorry for the man and said, 'I will help you.' So the Sun-father scattered some huckleberry bushes along the trail where the woman was traveling."

At this the Story-Teller broke several sprigs from the berry bush he held in his hand and threw them down on the ground immediately in

front of him. The children watched intently and as if they expected some magic bushes to spring up where the sprigs had fallen. Then he continued:

"When the woman came up to the huckleberry bushes she passed without paying any attention to them whatever.

"Next the Sun-father scattered a clump of blackberry bushes along the trail."

A second time the Story-Teller suited his action to the story by breaking from the bush more sprigs and tossing them a little beyond the ones first scattered. The act was again followed by close observing eyes.

"While the woman saw the bushes and that they were hanging full of berries she did not stop to gather any of them but continued on her way straight forward. Other trees and bushes, many of them, were scattered along the trail."

At this the Story-Teller arose and walked about the inner circle of the camp-fire scattering pieces of the berry bush as he went until no pieces remained in his hands.

He then seated himself and continued:

"When the Sun-father had emptied his hands of trees and bushes the man became very unhappy for his wife yet continued to travel from him.

"The Sun-father, however, only smiled. As he did so there was a twinkle in his eye. Stooping down very low he whispered to the Earth-mother something that made her smile also. Now at the place of the earth-smile delicious berries began to grow on vines which lay close to the heart of the Earth-mother. When the woman came to the place, she paused and looked for a moment then started on again, but not to go far for soon she was stooping down to pick and eat the delicious fruit. Nearer and nearer came her husband until at last he overtook her at the place of the earth-smile. Here they became reconciled. The Indian name for the fruit means 'Earth berry.' Pale faces call it strawberry. Ugh!"

Oo-Ie Oo-Ie

"OO-IE OO-IE!" Thus the Story-Teller greeted the camp-fire company as he came upon them suddenly from an unexpected direction. A generous smile played upon his bronzed features when he observed the surprise of the children.

"I thought Indians never laughed," said a white child to his mother, sitting at his side. The remark, though whispered, was caught by the keen ears of a group of Indian children near by. Their hearty laughter



"I THOUGHT INDIANS NEVER LAUGHED"

which followed was the complete undeceiving of the misinformed white child.

"Evidently they do," replied the mother who herself, like many other white adults, had conceived the false notion that Indians were void of humor and unused to any demonstrations of merriment.

The Story-Teller spread his blanket, squatted upon it, and was soon in the midst of his story.

How the Turkey Got his "Gobble-Gobble-Gobble"

(Cherokee)

"IN the early days, the grouse had a very fine voice. His singing was the envy of all the feathered folks. The turkey had no voice at all but desired to become a sweet singer like the grouse. So the turkey decided to ask the grouse to teach him to sing. The grouse consented, but on one condition, and that was that the turkey should give him enough feathers for a collar. Until then the grouse had no collar.

"The turkey was very slow to learn. One plan after another was tried by the faithful teacher but with no success. At length the grouse became discouraged but resolved on one final experiment.

"And so one day the grouse took the turkey into the woods where they found a hollow log. The grouse said, "You go into the hollow log and when I tap on it you must cry out, 'Halloo,' three times, as loudly as you can.

"The grouse climbed upon the hollow log while the turkey spread his feathers and strutted toward the opening in the end, proud that now he, too, was to have a sweet voice like that of the grouse.

"When the grouse tapped once, he listed, but only heard a faint gurgling sound from the turkey. This amused the grouse and he tapped more loudly. The turkey became so frightened at the loud tapping that he rushed from the log and the only thing he could do when he opened his mouth to cry 'Halloo' was to say 'Gobble, Gobble, Gobble.'

"The grouse was so amused that he kept on tapping just to hear the turkey gobble. Ever since that day the turkey gobbles three times whenever he hears a noise. And ever since that day, also, when the grouse starts to tap on a log he cannot stop with the one tap but continues just as he did when he frightened the turkey gobbler. The grouse also still wears his collar of turkey feathers. Ugh!"

How Wild Roses Got Their Thorns

(Salteaux)

“ONCE long ago the wild roses had no thorns. They grew on stems that were smooth. To the rabbit the tender bark was a favorite food, and wherever he found wild rose bushes, he feasted. Even the pink petals and the green leaves were eaten. After a time there was danger that all the wild rose bushes would be gone because of the rabbit’s fondness for them.

“And so one day the rose bushes met in counsel to decide what should be done that they might not be entirely destroyed. It was finally decided that they should go and find Nanahboozhoo and ask him for help.

“Now Nanahboozhoo was sort of an under deity and possessed the power of transforming himself into various forms. Sometime he would appear as tall as a pine, then again, as short as a mushroom. Sometimes he took the form of animals. As a consequence of his assuming different forms it was not always easy to find him.

“Search, however, was begun. Mounted on the shoulder of a strong wind they asked all the trees and rocks and animals they passed, ‘Have you seen Nanahboozhoo?’ All alike replied that they had not.

“On and on the rose bushes traveled until they came to a squirrel. Of him they made the same inquiry and were told that Nanahboozhoo was in a valley among the mountains where he was planting and taking care of a flower garden.

“Then the wind traveled down the valley until the flower garden of Nanahboozhoo was reached. As the rose bushes drew near they heard him shouting in great rage. For a little time they were frightened and hid among some sheltering trees.

“After a while they learned the cause of his anger. He had planted a hedge of wild roses about his garden, and just as it was becoming beautiful with fragrant pink blossoms, rabbits had stolen into the garden and eaten the hedge.

“The rose bushes were now no longer fearful but felt they had found a friend in Nanahboozhoo. The wind then brought them before him and they stated their grievance and besought his aid. He was much pleased to see them for he had feared that all rose bushes were now destroyed.

“He said, ‘You need to be armed against your enemy, and I will provide you with a means of defence.’

“He then went to a thorn bush, plucked some thorns. These he ground into a powder and sprinkled over the rose bushes. Ever since that time the wild rose bushes have been provided small thorn-like prickles as a means of self protection. Ugh!”

How the Indian Got Maple Sugar

(*Salteaux*)

AFTER Nanahboozhoo had given wild roses their thorns, he wandered about the world playing pranks on the Little People of Darkness. They finally decided to have revenge on him by killing his grandmother, Nokomis. Nanahboozhoo was devoted to her and when he heard of the plans of the Little People he took Nokomis on his strong back, transformed himself into a great bird and flew away with her to a forest.

"It was a beautiful forest. The time was early autumn, and the maple trees were yellow and crimson and green. From a distance the trees resembled a great fire.

"The Little People learned of Nanahboozhoo's departure, taking his grandmother with him, and they resolved to follow. But when they came to the forest and saw the bright colors in the maple trees they thought the whole world was on fire. They turned back and hurried to their hiding places.

"Nanahboozhoo knew what had happened and was so pleased with what the beautiful maples had done in saving his grandmother that he decided to live among them. He made Nokomis a wigwam of their brightest branches.

"One day some Indians who had visited in the far South told Nanahboozhoo that the Indians of the South had a sweet substance called sugar and that they had none. They explained how they had sent runners to the South to get an abundance of this sweet substance, and how some of the runners had been killed and others tortured and wounded.

"‘Tell us,’ they besought Nanahboozhoo, ‘how we may get sugar for ourselves.’

"Nanahboozhoo listened wonderingly. He had been in the Southland and knew of the sugar and how hard it was to get it.

"Nokomis, when she heard the request made by the Indians, added her pleadings, for she too had tasted sugar. At this, Nanahboozhoo resolved to do something, for he could not resist his grandmother's plea. Then he thought of the Maple Trees and how kind they had been to his grandmother,

"‘Since the Maple Trees were so good to my grandmother, I will make them a blessing to many,’ he resolved. ‘Henceforth, in the spring of the year, the sap of the Maple Tree shall be sweet. When this sap is boiled down, it shall harden into sugar.’

"That's how the Indians got maple sugar. Ugh!"



"OUR HERO POINTED AN ARROW AT THE GIANT'S FOOT AND SHOT HIM"

Where Mosquitoes Came From

THE camp-fire company suffered no little annoyance tonight from an unusual number of mosquitoes. Handkerchiefs and leafy sprigs plucked from nearby trees were kept in constant motion to prevent the pest from inflicting his poisonous sting. The children had mostly gathered on the smoke side of the fire, preferring to suffer the discomforts of the smoke to those of the mosquitoes.

When the Story-Teller approached, he looked upon the company for a few moments, smiled, and said, "Where mosquitoes come from." The company laughed heartily.

"Once there lived a great giant in the far north. His name was Kos-sa-ka. Kos-sa-ka was noted throughout the country as a great man eater.

"Also in those days there was a young man who made a business of killing giants. If any day he failed to kill a giant, he felt that day was lost and doubled his energies on the following day that he might make amends for his failure. Finally he determined to kill Kos-sa-ka and free the country of this terrible and much feared man eater.

"One day he stole into the giant's house and hid himself under some blankets. But the giant found him. The giant said, 'I'll kill him and eat him.' And he went out to get his knife. This giant had often been shot at, but the arrows had bounded off. That was what made the giant so dangerous.

"Soon the son of the giant came in and the boy jumped up and pointed his arrow at the son of the giant and said, 'Tell me how I can kill your father, or I will kill you.' The boy replied, 'Shoot him on his instep. His heart is there.'

"The giant soon came in, and our hero pointed an arrow at the giant's foot and shot him. The dying giant said, 'Though you burn me, I'll bite you.'

"Our hero burned the giant's body and threw the ashes up into the air, and said, 'Bite me, will you?' Each particle of ashes became a mosquito, and so the giant has been biting man ever since. Ugh!"

How the Gray Woodpecker Got His Stripes of Red

(Wyandot)

"AN INDIAN maiden lived all alone in her pretty lodge. She was beautiful and many braves courted her. She had for a servant a gray woodpecker. Whenever she expected a visit from a brave, or whenever she wished to go to a festival or dance, the gray woodpecker would be called to come in and dress her. As he did so he always contrasted her beauty with his own plainness. If he could only have some of the color of the beautiful beads by which she was decorated, or the garments she wore, or the paints she spread upon her face, he too might be thought beautiful.

"One day when the gray woodpecker had finished dressing the maid for a wonderful fiesta, he was charmed with her beauty. He had plaited into her long braids gaily colored feathers and beads that reflected all the colors of the rainbow. She was surely an object of adoration, and long did the gray woodpecker look with admiring eye as she departed. He then looked at his own plain coat and said, 'How I wish I had some red feathers!'

"Turning about to go indoors, he found that the maiden in her haste had left on the floor a brush dipped in red paint.

"'Ah ha!' said the gray woodpecker, 'now I can make myself beautiful.'

"He then picked up the brush and drew it across each side of his head just above his ears. He wears those two tiny red spots to this day. Ugh!"

How the Blue Bird Got Its Color

(Pima)

"THE Blue Bird is beautiful to look upon, but once his coat was very ugly. It all happened in this way: One day in its flight it came to a lake where no river flowed in or out. Four times each morning for four mornings the bird bathed in the lake. Each morning it sang a magic song.

'There's blue water
It lies there
I went in
I'm all blue.'

"On the fourth morning Blue Bird shed all his feathers and came out of the lake just in his skin. The next morning when he came out of the water he was clothed with a beautiful covering of blue feathers.

"All this time Coyote had watched Blue Bird, waiting for a chance to spring upon him, for Coyote wanted to eat him. Coyote, however, was afraid of the water and dared not venture into it. On the last morning he said, 'Blue Bird how is it you have lost your ugly color? You are now a beautiful blue, more beautiful than all the people of the air. I want to be beautiful like you. Tell me how I may become as beautiful as you are.' At that time Coyote was a bright green—brighter than young grass.

"'I went into the water four times on four mornings,' replied Blue Bird. 'Each morning I sang a magic song.'

"'Teach me to sing the song,' said Coyote.

"And so Blue Bird from his place on the branch of the tree sang the magic song and taught Coyote how to sing. When he had learned the magic song he went into the water. The first morning there was no change but on the fourth morning Coyote came out of the water just in his skin and as bare as Blue Bird was when he lost his feathers. Sure enough he came from the next bath with a coat of beautiful blue. He was so proud that he watched on every side, as he traveled along, to see if anybody was looking at him and at his beautiful new coat. Coming to a pool of clear water he caught sight of himself reflected in all the grandeur of his new attire. As Coyote went on his way he was so intent on watching to see if others were looking at him that he failed to keep his eye on the trail and bumped his head so hard on a stump that he was thrown down in the dirt and covered all over with dust. You may know this is true because even to this day Coyote is the color of dirt. Coyote felt so badly that he began to cry and his head pained him so severely that he continued his wailing cry.

"Today when we hear Coyote howl we know he is thinking of his beautiful coat and is mourning its loss. Ugh!"

Why the Possum Played Dead

"THE Possum and the Rabbit were both without wives. They had courted many of their friends but could find no one willing to marry them.

"At last they decided to travel abroad in search of a wife. They set out for a distant village. 'I will say,' said the Rabbit, 'that I am a



THE WOMEN OF THE TRIBES ARE WAITING

messenger from the Council and that it has been decided that everybody must marry at once, then we will be sure to get wives.'

"They had not traveled far before the Rabbit became impatient at the slow pace of the Possum and so he hurried on in advance.

"When the people saw him standing alone outside their village they invited him in. He was taken to the Council Lodge. Here the chiefs asked his business. He replied that he had brought an important message, 'Every one must be married at once.' The chiefs immediately called for an assembly of the people and told them the message.

"Every animal took a mate at once. So the Rabbit got a wife.

"When Possum reached the village there was no wife for him. The Rabbit pretended to be very sorry and said, 'Never mind I will carry the message to the next village and then you will surely get a wife.'

"The Rabbit traveled ahead to the next village. Here also he was invited to the Council Lodge. He explained to the chiefs that he had brought an important message. 'There had been peace so long that there must be war at once. The war must begin in the Council Lodge.' And so the animals all began to fight at once. But Rabbit got away in just four leaps.

"By this time Possum reached the lodge. Now, the Possum who had always been a great fighter brought no weapons with him so was unable to defend himself. The animals began to fight Possum. They hit him so hard that he finally rolled over into the corner and shut his eyes pretended to be dead, then the animals turned from him and went to fighting among themselves.

"This is why the Possum pretends to be dead when hunters come upon him. Ever since that day possum ceased to be a fighter. Ugh!"

Through the Smoke of the Fire

THE Story Teller of the Tribe has a sad tale to tell to the young Indians, who listen intent upon his every word. In his recital of the glorious days of the hunts of his forefathers he grows eloquent and all the fire of his heritage glows in his heart. But when he begins to recite the coming of the White Man from across the great waters his voice becomes strange and his eyes fill with resentment. He tells of the unfair bartering which robbed the Red Man of his lands. The battles fought from behind trees cause his voice to betray his enthusiasm. The degradation which came to his people through the introduction of fire water stirs him to fresh indignation, while the dread diseases of the white man which took away



"WHAT WILL OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS RECEIVE?"

their physical vigor cause deprecations of deep disgust. Little wonder that the boys and young men ask why citizenship is denied them, why they are exiled to Government reservations, why a brave no longer has any legal rights, and the control of his children. He has met treacherousness and cruelty with cruelty and treacherousness, and he alone has been obliged to pay. Is this the democracy for which their fathers and brothers went overseas to fight. Can America ever right this wrong except by providing adequate schooling for the children, the teaching of American home life to the women, the giving of citizenship to all and such a message of the Cross as includes justice to the American Indian in its application. Our obligation is inherited, but it must be met to justify our idealistic appeal to the nations of the world. And the Methodist Episcopal Church, which began its missionary work with a message to the Wyandots, can never justify its long neglect of the Oneidas, Ottawas, Senecas, Shoshoni, Yumas and the other tribes who have heard of Christianity, but believe it to be a part of the democracy which America has meted out to them. At best it may meet its present share of America's obligation to the American Indian and minister to him as his needs require.

One the Story Teller Wants You to Know

Who has thought of democracy for the American Indian? The manner in which his land was schemed for and stolen away from him surely did not give him any high ideal of the Christianity which actuated the despoilers of his hunting grounds. That he struck back, and in a way cruel and barbarous, does not justify the method used in separating him from his possessions. Nor has the placing him on reservations added any to the record of our nation in dealing with these people. To-day the Indians are raising their war whoop in the trenches in the fight for the very principles which were withheld in dealing with them. That the first Methodist Episcopal missionaries were sent to the Indian is an interesting fact historically. That the church did not follow up this work in a Christian statesmanlike way is deplorable.

The Indian has furnished more than one essayist and public speaker with material on "The Vanishing Race of Redmen." But he has not vanished. Undemocratic and unchristian treatment has had the opposite effect. To-day the Indians are increasing. Scattered over the country are over 350,000 of them. What an opportunity for Christian democracy! The 70,000 children who are under ten years of age will have incalculable influence on the next generation. The church has done something for the

Indian, but not all that it should. Some 90,000 over ten years of age are adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, while 60,000 are members of the evangelical churches. Of the 130,000 who are not identified with any church, 60,000 are in tribes where there is no opportunity to learn of Jesus Christ from either Protestants or Roman Catholics.

The conditions of life of the Indian varies. Location and the property he may have had are the chief factors of difference. Sometimes he is very poor, while again there are large amounts of money to his credit invested by the government at Washington. Which of these classes is most difficult to reach? It is not easy to determine. The possession of wealth is not unmixed blessing. It has a tendency to pauperize. It curtails the development of industry. Moreover, the government treats the Indians too much as wards, not recognizing their fitness for citizenship when that fitness exists.

One of the great hopes for firing the Indian with the modern dreams of democracy lies in the public school or reservation day school. The children are gradually receiving this opportunity. This brings them in close contact with all the other elements of the population. It prepares them for the future responsibilities of citizenship. It inspires them with the hope of having a part in the future greatness of the land which once was the sole possession of their fathers. College training is also having its influence. The evolution from the days of paint and feathers and the red trail of the massacre to educated men and women who are a surety of what the years may bring for all has been more rapid than we realize; 78,000 Indians are already citizens of the United States, and instead of following the hunt they are cultivating nearly 700,000 acres of land.

What a day it will be when the people from whom this great land was taken come into their own. And how different will be their estate than was their fathers. Already the Methodist Episcopal Church, in common with other denominations, is at work on the task of bringing that day to pass. What if the church should suddenly awake to the possibility of hastening somewhat in this respect, and take on its full share of this most fruitful venture! The tribes which at present receive the ministry of the Christian Church through Methodist Episcopal agencies are the Oneida, Onondaga, Ottawa, Saint Regis, Seneca, Mohawk, Chippewa, Blackfeet, Klamath, Lake Modac, Nooksak, Paiute, Pomo, Potawatomi, Siletz, Shoshoni, Washo, Yukaia, and Yuma. In several of these tribes the work is done by the Woman's Home Missionary Society. Methodism has been asked by the Home Missions Council also to assume responsibility for the giving of the gospel to some 15,000 Indians scattered in small tribes in California. While it is encouraging to read the list of tribes just given, in general it must be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church has not yet assumed its fair

share of the task of supplanting the heritage of the wigwam with the Christian home.

The story is long and the campfire is burning low. The rest of the story, with directions for helping the American Indian to possess the joy of life, may be secured by writing to the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1701 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

